

## House Republican Press Release

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### Hetherington Supports Transportation, Jobs Bills



State Rep. John Hetherington, R-125th, New Canaan, Wilton, hailed passage of a 10-year, \$2.3-billion transportation package that will improve both highways and rail operations.

The state House of Representatives approved the legislation, HB 5844, by a vote of 143-4. The measure now goes to the Senate and then to the governor for enactment into law.

The package follows Gov. M. Jodi Rell's \$1.3 transportation initiative last year that included funding for 342 new rail cars on Metro-North's New Haven commuter rail line.

Rep. Hetherington also voted for a job-creating package of tax cuts and other initiatives, SB 702, to help stimulate the state's lagging economy and improve its business climate.

The jobs measure approved by the state House and Senate will phase out the local property tax on manufacturing equipment, provide tax incentives to the film industry and undertake other efforts to promote job creation.

Rep. Hetherington noted that the jobs bill establishes new programs designed to encourage innovation including recruitment of eminent faculty at University of Connecticut (UConn), a new UConn Center for Entrepreneurship, funds for small business incubators and programs to provide early stage venture capital, as well as matching grants for micro-businesses.

The legislation also requires the state Department of Education to establish three pilot grant programs related to math and science education, and it creates education loan relief programs for doctoral students and engineering students.

Rep. Hetherington said, "Certainly, this jobs bill is just a start. There are great number of other things the state needs to do to create a business friendly environment. Conspicuously missing from the bill were proposals that I have supported to eliminate the \$250 minimum business tax, eliminate the corporate income tax surcharge that was supposed to be temporary and reduce taxes on electricity. Overall, this is a good start."

On the transportation legislation, Rep. Hetherington said “This package includes improvements to the New Haven Line, its branch lines, Bridgeport harbor and other transportation facilities that benefit travelers throughout the entire state of Connecticut.”

Rep. Hetherington noted that the transportation improvements will generate economic activity and support businesses along the rail lines.

Among the provision of the bill are:

- Improvements to New Haven Line rail stations and parking lots
- Upgrading Danbury, New Canaan and Waterbury branch lines, thereby taking some burden off New Haven main line stations
- Reviving commuter rail service from New Haven north to Hartford, Bradley Airport and Springfield, Massachusetts
- Improving Bridgeport Harbor for barge service to ease truck traffic on I-95
- Possible improvements to congested sections of I-95 east of Branford
- Increasing service on the Shoreline East railroad from New Haven to New London, connecting with ferry service there.

Rep. Hetherington serves the 125th Assembly District of New Canaan and Wilton in the state House of Representatives.